

The Gospel Herald

“As the truth is in Jesus” (Ephesians 4:21)

For The LORD’S PILGRIMS, STRANGERS & SOJOURNERS

by
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The Christian and Cremation

It was a number of years ago that a dear elderly sister approached me after a meeting and asked if she could have a moment to ask me a question, I said absolutely, and she asked what I think about cremation as a Christian, and what I believe the Bible teaches on the matter.

This was one of many occasions that folks have ask me the same question over the years as spouses and loved ones become fatally afflicted with an illness or those who have recently deceased that requested Cremation as the means to dispose of the mortal body.

I wrote a small article tract on the subject shortly after being asked about the matter on numerous occasions, hoping to give some Biblical insight as to what I was revealed from the Holy Writ to share with those of interest.

First, I want to bring our attention as to who we are in Christ. As God’s children, adopted by our heavenly Father as Son’s and Daughter’s of God into his eternal family and joint heirs with our beloved Saviour.

“For ye are bought with a price: therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (I Corin.6:20). “Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men” (I Corin. 7:23).

We must conclude that we have been purchased by God by the precious blood of his dear Son and placed into an everlasting covenant and relationship with the Almighty. Therefore, we are NOT our own.

Being the purchased possession of God as his heirs as children, our Father must dictate the means by which this mortal body shall be laid to rest awaiting that glorious resurrection which is our great expectation as corruption shall put on incorruption and mortality shall be clothed with immortality.

To find the will of the Father in the deceased body of the heir of grace, I reflect on this scriptural account, "So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And He (the Lord) buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor; But no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day" (Duet.34:5-6).

The Lord God personally "BURIED" Moses body in a valley in Moab. Being that God Almighty buried his servant Moses, this gives me every reason to believe that God desires the mortal bodies of his people to be laid to rest in a physical burial procedure. "Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be BURIED" (Ruth 1:17).

"I am a stranger and a sojourner with you; give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight" (Gen. 23:3-11) regarding the burial of Abraham's wife Sarah. I find in excess of thirty-five scripture verses in the Old Testament alone that make reference to "burial of the deceased people of God."

Out of the six verses in the New Testament in reference to the burying of the deceased, the following substantiates God's good pleasure in burying the bodies of his people: "Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to BURY" (John 19:40).

It was ALWAYS the paganistic heathen that were those that disposed of their dead by burning their bodies. This practice has migrated and infiltrated the Christian realm over the years as COST was the major influence. Another aspect of our Christian roots eroding away with the tides of foreign cultural practices.

It is one thing to be ignorant of the Biblical teaching as I have set forth in laying to rest are loved ones and falling prey to the inexpensive popular cremation disposal of the mortal frame. But, if I were ask what is the Biblical example of God's people dealing with their deceased, I must say, the scriptures are clear as to in-ground burial or entombment of the deceased. If our God set as an example by burying the body of Moses, that is the means that is pleasing in his sight.

So, the final analysis of our Biblical observation makes burial the method that the people of God took care of their loved ones. For we are NOT OR OWN to make a decision to willfully decide to have our bodies burned; we are the Lord's purchased possession. We belong to Him, may we be those that desire to follow his example in all things regarding life and death for His glory, honor and praise.

Let me conclude by making some comments on those that have been professing believers that have been cremated either by personal choice or choice by surviving family. Our God, being Almighty and absolute Sovereign in all his divine character, shall raise from the ashes the molecules of their mortal remains and cause them to be united again in that great resurrection day. Just as those that were destroyed by fire as martyr's in early Christendom, or by an enemy's bomb, even through burning of a

structural fire, our God shall cause the great and small to be raised again and stand before the Lord God Almighty as it fulfills his divine will.

If ask, how shall a Christian handle the body of their deceased, I say according the Holy scriptures, BURIAL IS PLEASING TO OUR GOD.

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